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STATE CONTROL COMMISSION REPORTS ON FORESTATION

The State Control Commission has inspected the departments in charge of flood prevention through forestation and fortification of terrain at the following cities: Kazanluk, Kyustendil, Sevlievo, and Kurdzhali, and the village of Mirkovo, Pirdop Okoliya, and has also inspected the department at the Ministry of Forests in charge of forest culture, forestation, and fortification of terrain against floods. The commission studied the results of forestation up to 1950, and the use of funds allocated to forestation.

The inspection of these departments and the department at the Ministry of Forests revealed that the situation of forestation for flood prevention in Bulgaria is extremely bad.

The managers of these projects have an irresponsible attitude toward the planting and preservation of forest growth. They make no effort to properly execute worthwhile forestation measures. For instance, the saplings are not planted according to the latest methods and techniques, and work is not done on the basis of Michurin's biological theories. Forest culture is not carried out properly in order to obtain the best results; the forests are not protected from damages from grazing cattle; and no care is taken in the selection of the various kinds of trees best suited for given soil and climatic conditions. Instead, old and outmoded methods are used by the responsible officials. As a result, in only 15 departments, 311,177,318 leva have been spent, and 1,041,098 voluntary man-days on the part of the population have been used for the period 1947 - 1950. The national economy has incurred losses from the withering of the saplings amounting to 156,465,741 leva or 50.28 percent of the expenses incurred and 50.60 percent of the utilized man-days.

Thus, for example, at the department for flood prevention and forestation at Sevlievo, headed by Konstantin Atanasov Khristov, the losses from withered saplings amount to 12,457,195 leva and 33,956 voluntary man-days; at the department at Kyustendil, headed by Grozdan Vasilev Tachev, the losses also amount to 12,192,864 leva and 28,558 voluntary man-days.

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One of the most important reasons for the unsatisfactory forestation is the lack of a regular and frequent weeding and spraying of the young forest growths.

Thus, for instance, at the department for flood prevention and forestation at Sevlievo, the plan for weeding and spraying the areas planted with forest growth has been fulfilled 71.60 percent; at the department at Kyustendil, of the 19,560 decarees planted during the period from 1947 to 1950, only 7,635 decarees of forest growth have been cultivated, or 39.03 percent, and of the 6,000 decarees established by the plan for cultivation of young trees during 1950, only 1,230 decarees, or 20.50 percent, have been cultivated, despite the fact that there have been adequate funds for that purpose.

At Gradut and Gugova strana, both near Sevlievo, on an area of 60 decarees where there has been no cultivation, the saplings have withered 100 percent; at Stoevoto and Dragin dyal, on an area of 210 decarees, the saplings have withered 95 percent; but at Plochata, Cherniyat trap, and Popova strana, on an area of 223 decarees, where the forest growth has been weeded and sprayed only once, only 50 percent of the saplings have withered. At Dupkata, on an area of 276 decarees, where the forest growth has been weeded and sprayed twice, only 30 percent of the saplings have withered.

Another important reason for the withering of saplings is that the officials of the Ministry of Forests and the heads of the departments all over the country have not taken the necessary measures for complying with the technical requirements. The holes dug have been too small, the saplings have not been sorted, defective and unhealthy saplings have been planted, the roots have been covered with stones instead of soil, and the place for planting has not been well chosen or well prepared.

The Ministry of Forests has not studied the problem pertaining to the types of trees most suitable for a given terrain. Thus, for instance, for the needs of the department at Kurdzhali, during the period from 1947 to 1950, seeds for planting different types of trees have been delivered from all parts of the country, from Razlog, Devin, Yundola, Peshtera, Kyustendil, Byala, Svilengrad, Svoge, Plovdiv, Oryakhovo, Lom, Balchik, Khaskovo, Karlovo, Petrich, and Sofia. During the period from 1945 to 1947, accacia was planted exclusively in Kurdzhali, but from 1947 to 1950, 90 percent of the planting was done with black pine, which does not give good results.

During the inspections, the State Control Commission observed certain cases where the newly planted trees had not been guarded against damage from grazing cattle.

Thus, for instance, the department for flood prevention and forestation at Kazanluk, formerly headed by Stefan Nikolov Stoykov, was responsible for the 67.50 percent of the saplings damaged by cattle in 1950 on an area of 363 decarees at G'ola. At Malka Gyurlya and Golyama Gyurlya, on an area of 167 decarees planted with saplings, 55 percent of the saplings had also been damaged by grazing cattle. The losses incurred by the national economy because of cattle grazing among the saplings amount to 945,493 leva in these localities alone. A 100-percent destruction of saplings by cattle occurred at Mekhitepe, near Kurdzhali, on an area of 45 decarees, and at Drumokhar-Chetirtsai on an area of 137 decarees.

The officials from the Ministry of Forests, particularly the officials from the department of forestation and flood prevention, have been very irresponsible and lax regarding the expenditure of and accounting for the funds which have been allotted for forestation.

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Thus, for instance, Ivan Georgiev Klisarov, the head of the department for flood prevention and forestation, and Stefan Gavrailov Aleksiev, the accountant-manager, did not know until the inspection was under way that 1,174,885,567 leva had been spent for forestation from the funds allotted for the period from 1947 to 1950. No accounting system at the department could show what funds the different local departments have received and spent.

The local departments for flood prevention and forestation which also take care of lumber production have not been properly supervised by the Ministry of Forests to see that they have kept regular accounts of the revenues from lumber and whether the amounts received have been deposited at the treasury at the time specified.

Thus, for instance, at the department at Kyustendil, Radenko pop Konstantinov the disbursing officer, has not kept a record of the expenses in connection with lumber production from 1 January 1949 to 22 March 1951, and has not entered 12,133,690 leva in the ledger as revenues, or 12,139,899 leva as expenditures.

Until 20 April 1951, the Ministry of Forests had not complied with the decree of the Council of Ministers and the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party, which requires the ministry to draft a complete plan for foresting the rayons exposed to floods by reservoirs not later than the end of 1950.

Although they had known about the existing defects at the local departments for flood prevention and forestation, Ivan Georgiev Klisarov, head of the department for flood prevention and forestation at the Ministry of Forests and the responsible officer for that department, and Vasil Serafimov, Deputy-Minister of Forests, have taken inadequate measures for improving forestation methods, cultivation of the young forest growth, protection from grazing cattle, care in choosing proper types of trees, and techniques in planting them. They have thus shown an irresponsible attitude regarding forestation for flood prevention. These preventive measures would also improve the water levels of the rivers and prevent a deficiency of water in the reservoirs, thus combatting dry spells which are problems of vital importance for the people and for the future development of the national economy.

To improve the work in forestation for flood prevention, the State Control Commission ordered the heads of the local departments which were inspected to take measures to eliminate the weaknesses that they had permitted to occur in connection with the quality of planting material and the observing of technical requirements of forestation and cultivation of young forest growth.

For weaknesses that were found to exist and irregularities that have been permitted to occur in local departments, the State Control Commission dismissed Stefan Nikolov Stoykov from his position as head of the department for flood prevention and forestation at Kazanluk and turned him over to the Attorney General for the prosecution. The commission dismissed Grozdan Vasilev Tachev as head of the same department at Kyustendil; dismissed Todor Yanev Stamatov as disbursing officer at the department at Kurdzhali; and imposed disciplinary punishment on the other guilty persons.

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